



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

puisse y être attachée: il vaut plus ou moins comme document littéraire et voilà tout." Which would seem to justify the philistine's contemptuous "C'est de la littérature, tout ça!"

BENJAMIN M. WOODBRIDGE.

University of Texas.

THE RÔLE OF THE GHOST IN *Hamlet*

The consensus of criticism is that the play of *Hamlet* is *Hamlet*; and there's an end. But Shakspeare has given an analysis of *Hamlet*. It is a drama of *casual, bloody, and unnatural acts*; a drama in which every personage in his time plays many parts. The Ghost, for one, has a greater rôle than is generally conceded. His interference in III, iv is the turning point in the play.

The pause between

And now I'll do't

and

And so he goes to heaven

is considered the climax of *Hamlet*. From the point of view of dramatic structure that is true. Hamlet has let slip the opportunity to kill Claudius. In the next scene the tragedies of the play are unchained. But we must recognize two sets of tragedies in *Hamlet*. There are the tragedies of Polonius, Guildenstern, etc., and there are the tragedies of Claudius, of Hamlet, of Gertrude. The deaths of Ophelia and the courtiers are but the small annexment that attends the boisterous ruin. Another reason for the view held of this passage is that it has been assumed that the Ghost's message and Hamlet's sole object is to kill Claudius.

Gertrude is uppermost in the mind of her son. When Hamlet learns that Claudius is the serpent that has stung King Hamlet, his first curse is for the most pernicious woman, his mother. The more villainous is Claudius, the more abject Gertrude's marriage to him. A greater crime has been committed than the murder of King Hamlet; the royal bed of Denmark has been made

A couch for luxury and damned incest.

And in Hamlet's heart there is the hope that his mother might be made to redeem herself.

Gertrude is uppermost in the mind of Claudius. It is to possess her that he has killed his brother. He enumerates the prizes of his crime:

My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.

The queen is at the top of the series.

She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her.

Claudius consents to Polonius' scheme. He is playing his all. Gertrude has seen in *the Murder of Gonzago* Hamlet's accusation against Claudius. A conversation with her son will prove to her either that Claudius has murdered King Hamlet or that Hamlet is insane.

The situation is therefore such when Hamlet enters his mother's closet that the victory will be with the faction with which the queen will side.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more,
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul,
And there I see such black and grained spots
As will not leave their tinct.

Enter Ghost.

Queen. Alas, he is mad.

There is the climax in the tragedy of Gertrude; and there is the turning point of the play.

Hamlet. It is not madness
That I have utter'd; bring me to the test.

Hamlet has lost his audience.

Queen. What shall I do?

This question is not addressed to Hamlet. One does not ask advice of the insane. The queen has heard of Hamlet's pranks; but she has not dared to believe him mad until before her very eyes he held discourse with the incorporal air. In her fear of the madman Gertrude has sided with Claudius.

MAURICE BAUDIN.

Miami University.

A NOTE ON MAUPASSANT

Petronius' skill as a story teller is nowhere more convincing than in his burlesque portrayals of faithless widows. The most famous of such tales is perhaps that of the *Widow of Ephesus*¹ with which Eumolpus enlivens a company of weary sailors. It is interesting to compare this sprightly tale of the Latin humorist with one of Maupassant's stories, *Les tombales*.² So striking is

¹ Titus Petronius Arbiter: *Satyricon*, in the Loeb Classical Library Edition, pp. 229 *et seq.* The story is also found in more condensed form in Phaedrus' *Fabulae* (appendix 13).

² *Œuvres de Guy de Maupassant: La maison Tellier.*